HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY REPORT

Dublin – U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Residence

Prepared

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Location: Dublin, Ireland

Present Owner: United States Department of State

Present Occupants: Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Department of State

Present Use: Domestic

Historian: Mark Barron

Significance: The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Residence is a surviving example of an early nineteenth century villa built on the northern edges of Dublin's Ballsbridge neighborhood. The house is a Georgian plan residence with elements of Greek Revival and Neo-Classical architectural styles. The use of architectural elements from the Greek Revival and Neo-Classical styles for a residence is uncommon in Dublin, as these stylistic qualities are more commonly seen in the city's government buildings from the nineteenth century.

From the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, the area surrounding the residence was home to several large estate houses and villas. By the early twenty-first century, few of these estate homes are still extant, as condominiums, commercial buildings, and apartment buildings have largely taken their place. What was once considered a suburb for Dublin is presently an urban neighborhood intermixed with affluent residences and buildings associated with financial institutions and technology companies.

PART 1: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Erection: The house was built between 1830 and 1837.

The residence is not shown on maps dated between 1820 and 1830, such as those examined in the National Archives of Ireland; the first known map to show the building and residential development is the 1837 Ordinance Survey Map of Ireland. [1]

2. Architect:

The architect is not known at this time.

3. Original and Subsequent Occupants:

In the nineteenth century, three directories (Thoms, Watson's, and the Dublin Alamanc) recorded the occupants of residences in Dublin and its immediate environs. [2] The first

[1] National Archives of Ireland, "Pembroke Estate," 97/46.4/12 and 97/46.4/20. Ordinance Survey of Ireland, 1837-1842.

[2] The three city directories are located on the reference shelves of the Dublin City Archive located at 144 Pearse St, Dublin 2.

directory to include the residence was the 1839 Dublin Almanac, collaborating its date of construction from the cartographical evidence. From 1839 to 1846, no street address is assigned to the houses along the Ballsbridge neighborhood roadway where the house is located, and in 1870, the properties were renumbered with the present-day addresses and street name. In 1951, the "American Embassy" was cited in the directory.

The following is list of occupants from 1839 to 1957:

1839-1841	Major Charles Gordon
1842-1843	William Gray Burn, Esq
1844-1846	Lieutenant-Colonel Charles King
1846-1860	Mrs. Charles King
1861-1864	UNKNOWN
1865-1884	Charles Barden Hely, Esq
1885-1894	Richard Wilkinson, Esq
1895-1900	VACANT
1900-1910	John Doherty, Esq
1910-1914	UNKNOWN
1915-1946	Bryan J. O'Donnell
1947-1948	Brigadier Eric Dormen-Smith
1949	Vinton Chapin
1950	VACANT
1951	Bruce William Lockling (American Embassy)
1952-1954	Cloyce K Houston (American Embassy)
1955-1957	William Adams (American Embassy)
1958	Arthur Emmons (American Embassy)

4. Builder, Contractors, and Suppliers:

Unknown at this time.

5. Original Plans and Construction:

No construction blueprints, renderings, or design plans are known to exist for the house. [3]

6. Alterations and Additions: The only known alteration or addition to the house is documented after the United States Department of State acquired it in 1948. In a House of Representatives Subcommittee that met in 1958 and 1959 to discuss Department of State purchases, William Hughes of the Foreign Buildings Operations was questioned by Congressman John J. Rooney of New York regarding building purchases in Dublin. During the hearings, Rooney stated his opinion that the residence was an "undesirable

[3] An archivist at the National Archives of Ireland noted that the Pembroke Estate Collection, a massive archive spanning the seventeenth century to the twentieth century, is still being processed. More information regarding the architect and construction plans may be discovered at a later date.

purchase" when acquired for $62,738 in 1948. Congressman Rooney followed his assessment of the house by asking Mr. Hughes about plans to purchase an adjoining structure. Mr. Hughes replied that it was a part of the original house, but had been divided into two separated units at an unknown earlier date. According to Mr. Hughes, the house was acquired for use by the State Department in 1948 with the agreement that an older couple could continue to live in the other apartment until their deaths. That unit was purchased in 1959 and the two units were rejoined as one residence. Upon hearing that government funds were used, Mr. Rooney claimed that Foreign Buildings Operations had thrown "good money after bad." [4]

B. Historical Context

A history of the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Residence must examine its association with the specificities of time and place. Houses are products of their location and of the people who built and inhabited them. They are also at the mercy of time, as settings and/or neighborhoods rise and fall in accordance with economic, social or political fortunes. The residence helps convey the history of Dublin's expansion and development of its south side. Its historic context is rooted in suburban development, and touches upon prominent themes of Irish history that include Protestant Ascendancy, Republicanism, and the Irish literary renaissance.

For the first three hundred years of Dublin's founding in the ninth century, the area south of the city and west of Dublin Bay was largely comprised of marsh and meadow with a few scattered villages. [5] In the twelfth century, Baggotrath Castle became one of the first early structures built south of the old city. The castle, with its accompanying village settlement, became an important part of a roadway connecting Dublin with areas to the south. In 1649, during the Irish Confederate Wars, which pitted Irish armies allied with English Royalists against Parliamentarians, Baggotrath Castle became the site of a decisive victory for the latter, ensuring the ultimate defeat of Irish Royalists in and around Dublin. [6] In an effort to discourage further uprisings by Irish Confederates in Dublin, Parliamentarians destroyed much of Baggotrath Castle. The ruins of the castle remained extant until the early nineteenth century. [7]

For the next one hundred years, from the mid seventeenth century to the mid eighteenth century, the area remained largely rural in character. The old thirteenth century road adjacent to the Baggotrath ruins that connected Dublin with towns and cities to the south

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[4] Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1958, Hearings before Subcommittee on Appropriations House of Representatives, Eighty-Fifth Congress (1st Session), pp. 882-884 ; Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1959, Hearings before Subcommittee on Appropriations House of Representatives, Eighty-Fifth Congress (2nd Session), pp. 798-800.

[5] Dublin was founded by Vikings in 841.

[6] The fighting at Baggotrath Castle was recorded as the Battle of Rathmines. J Huband Smith, "On the Castle and Manor of Baggotrath," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 6, 304-311. Deirdre Kelly, Four Roads to Dublin" *A History of Rathmines, Ranelagh, and Leeson Street* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2001), 35-37.

[7] Many local Dublin historians place the location of Baggotrath Castle just south of the present-day Baggot St Bridge.

came to be known as the Gallows Road, an execution site for criminals and Irish rebels, alike.[8] After the defeat of the Irish Confederates and the subsequent conquests of Oliver Cromwell, Ireland was effectively a client state (a state that exists in an unequal economic, political, and military relationship with another) of Great Britain. [9]

In the mid eighteenth century, two civil engineering projects significantly altered the area south of Dublin and west of Dublin Bay. The first project was the construction of the Circular Road, a transportation route that would encircle the city limits of Dublin. Proposed in two segments, a north side and a south side, the Circular Road would serve as a transportation corridor to move both people and military forces. Beginning in the early 1700s, Ireland, then dominated militarily by Great Britain, entered an era known as the age of ascendancy, a period that saw British Protestants and wealth claim control over state economics and politics. As Dublin's wealth grew in the eighteenth century, British Protestants and wealthy elites (who over time would be known as the Anglo-Irish) demanded security from any potential uprising of discontented Irish Catholics. The construction of the Circular Road served this purpose, as the British military built numerous barracks for the Army and Calvary (see Figure 1, next page). [10]

[8] The Gallows Road will eventually become Upper Baggot St.
[9] Thomas Bartlett, "Ireland, Empire and Union, 1690-1801," in Kevin Kenny, ed *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2004), 61-90.
[10] Christine Casey, Dublin: The City Within the Grand and Royal Canals and the Circular Road with the Phoenix Park (Yale University Press, 2005), 39-43. *History of the City of Dublin, Vol II* (London, 1818), 1106-1107.

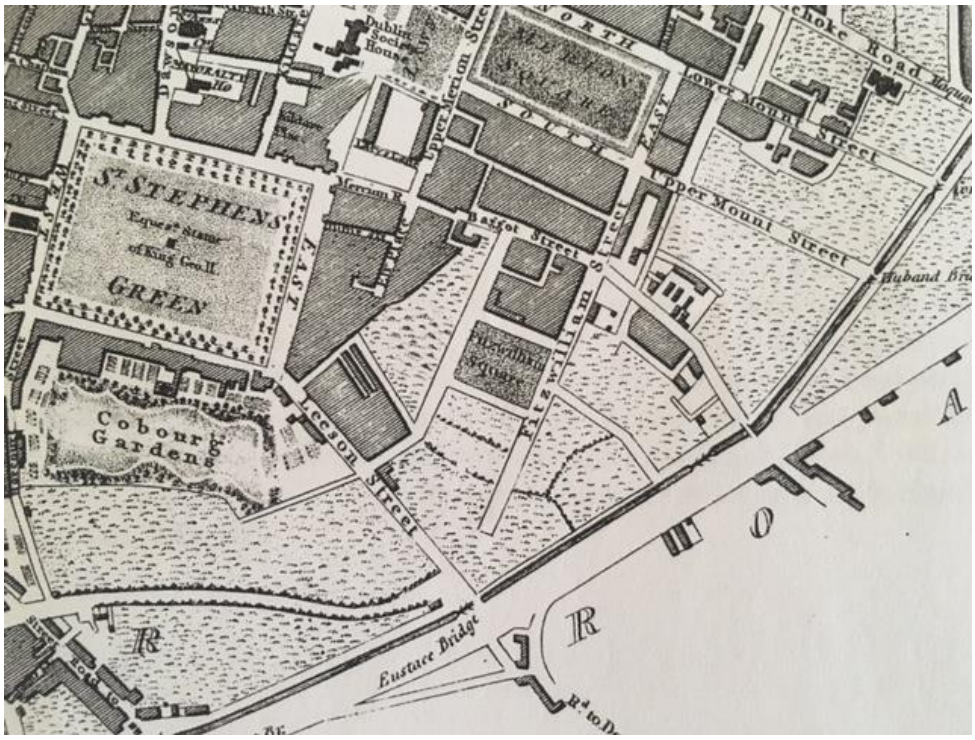

Figure 1: The three barracks buildings between the "R" and the "O" were located on the South Circular Road. "Plan of Dublin" in *History of the City of Dublin, Vol II* (London, 1818).

The second civil engineering project of the era was the construction of the Grand Canal, a water channel that connected the River Shannon to Dublin Bay. Designed to move goods and resources from the western half of Ireland to the east, the Grand Canal was an early component in the industrialization of the country, as merchants, entrepreneurs, and later capitalists used the channel to transport items to England. [11]

Together, the two engineering projects granted security and commerce to Ireland's minority Anglo-Irish population. Into the second half of the eighteenth century, the area began to grow with houses, commercial buildings, and industries. In 1762, for instance, the area around Baggothrath contained over 260 houses. In the area of present-day Upper Leeson St in the last quarter of the 1700s, "several large villas" were noted on the outskirts of Dublin city (see Figure 2). Many of these large villas were considered country homes for wealthy Dublin residents, many of whom held offices in the city center. [12]

[11] Ibid.

[12] Beatrice Doran, *Donnybrook: A History* (Dublin: The History Press; reprint 2013), np. Deirdre Kelly, *Four Roads to Dublin: A History of Rathmines, Ranelagh, and Leeson Street* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2001), 51-53.

Figure 2. Suburban Villa, Pembroke Estate. Deirdre Kelly, *Four Roads to Dublin: A History of Rathmines, Ranelagh, and Leeson Street* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2001).

The geographic area south of the city Dublin formed the land holdings of the Earl of Pembroke and his family. As the area grew from countryside to suburban and urban density in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, several communities would emerge, notably Ballsbridge, Rathmines, and Donnybrook. According to an 1803 map of Pembroke, the villa shown here was on land leased from the Pembroke family and the road through the new communities was named after the property. [13] The house was demolished in the mid twentieth century to make room for the Irish Life Flats. The decorative plaster-works from the building were recovered prior to demolition and were placed in Dublin Castle. [14]

During the early nineteenth century, the northern portion of the Pembroke estate continued to grow with new residences and commercial sites. At an unknown point between 1830 and 1837, a new residential development was built in what would become Ballsbridge and included the present-day U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Residence and a row of Victorian townhouses.

The new residential area was an affluent development that catered to Anglo-Irish families and military personnel. In keeping with the area's strong Anglo-Irish connections, the

[13] A map is in the Pembroke collection, but was not processed by 2017. Ireland's land-lease system is difficult to understand, but it appears holders signed a long term lease (up to 99 years, in some cases) and could build or farm as they saw fit – as long as annual payments were made. National Archives of Ireland, 1803 Map by John Roe, Pembroke Estate Collection [97/46.4/12].

[14] William Hederman, An Historical Trail Around the Upper Leeson St Area (ND, NP), 11.

emerging neighborhoods kept close ties with the military and Protestant Church of Ireland (Anglican). Tensions between Protestant Anglo-Irish and the Catholic majority can be seen in primary newspapers from the nineteenth century, where families requested servants for hire, but often stipulated that they must be Protestant. [15]

Pembroke Township was formerly incorporated in 1863, and continued to prosper until the last decade of the nineteenth century. [16] Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, the Pembroke Estate continued to be developed for residential and commercial use in the Ballsbridge neighborhood.

According to an 1898 slum survey for the city of Dublin, inspectors noted that the northern edges of Ballsbridge were deteriorating at a rapid rate. In a newspaper piece, the city's slum commissioner wrote that "Though [it] cannot be regarded as a slum quarter in the generally accepted sense of the term, I found existing in one or two houses in this locality a condition of sanitary affairs not much superior to that which is so frequently to be met in the slums." [17] The reason for the decline in the formerly affluent areas most likely rests in the ending of Protestant Ascendancy in Dublin. Factors such as the Act of Union in 1801, which allowed Irish elected officials to take seats in Parliament, and the recurring fights of Irish Home Rule in the nineteenth century, led many prominent families to leave Pembroke. Likewise, many of the barracks created in the late eighteenth century were closed by the late nineteenth century, largely due to the Act of Union. With fewer military personnel needed for service in Dublin, houses such as those on former Pembroke land were no longer in demand by army officers and their families. [18]

With many Unionist Protestant families leaving the neighborhood, it became more diverse, both in terms of religion and economic class. Based city directories and newspaper advertisements, renters made up a significant portion of the occupants in the early twentieth century. In the lead up to the War for Irish Independence, revolutionary leader Michael Collins had a safe house in Ballsbridge, which was used to pass information and provide safe harbor for the Irish independence movement. [19] In 1921, Republican soldiers ambushed police cadets in a bomb attack in the neighborhood; no one was injured in the attack, but the cadets engaged in a brief skirmish with Republican soldiers along the roadway. [20]

During the Irish Civil War that followed the War for Independence, the northside of Ballsbridge in the old Pembroke Estate was also the site of several skirmishes – this time between Free-Staters and the Irish Republican Army. [21] A resident of one of the Victorian

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[15] *Sanders's News Letter*, 27 October 1853; *Irish Times*, 29 October 1861.
[16] Seamas O'Maitiu, *Dublin's Suburban Towns, 1834-1930* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 52-53.
[17] *Dublin Daily Nation*, 27 September 1898.
[18] For more information, consult the essays in Michael Brown, Patrick M Geoghegan, and James Kelly, eds, *The Irish Act of Union, 1800: Bicentennial Essays* (Dubin: Irish Academic Press, 2003).
[19] https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/michael-collins-s-women-spies-couriers-and-mothers-1.3071543
[20] *Globe*, 20 January 1921.
[21] A highly complicated history, Free-State supporters (led by Michael Collins) supported a treaty allowing Ireland to become a self-governing country, but with Northern Ireland staying in the United Kingdom. Irish Republicans demanded full and separate independence for all of Ireland, including the north.

row houses filed a damage claim with the government in 1923, noting that "on four occasions, the [adjacent] house […] was raided by Free State soldiers, and as the roof of my house is continuous with the roofs of the adjoining houses, further from time to time firing was directed towards my house and my neighbor's houses, as I assume snipers and spies were seen on the roofs of the terrace." [22]

After the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, the absorption of Pembroke into the city of Dublin in the 1930s, and formation of the Republic of Ireland in 1937, the area remained a mixture of working class renters, aging affluent families, and growing group of artists. By the mid twentieth century, the northern side of Ballsbridge became a significant locale for Irish writers and painters. Attracted by the rich cultural traditions of the area and its low rents, the neighborhood was home to Mary Lavin, Sarah Purser, Patrick Kavanagh, and Brendan Behan, among others. Another famous Irish woman, Iris Kellet, a world-renown horseback rider and trainer, operated her riding facility nearby.

In 1948, the United States Department of State acquired the residential property. Originally purchased to alleviate overcrowding in the State Department's Merrion Square office, the house eventually became the residence of the Deputy Chief of Mission for Ireland. The purchases of the residential lot and a piece of property on Elgin Road that would become the U.S. embassy for Ireland were bought at discounted prices in the mid twentieth century. The condition of the properties is discussed in an exchange between a U.S. Congressman on the State Department subcommittee for foreign purchases and a member of the Foreign Buildings Operations (FBO). In the exchange, Congressman Rooney chastised the State Department for purchasing property in a "slum" neighborhood. The FBO responded that the neighborhood was not a slum, and that his office considered the purchase to be an excellent choice. [23]

As of 2017, the northern Ballsbridge neighborhood that includes the residence is recognized as one of the more affluent areas in Dublin. The neighborhood presently consists of private residences, office buildings, and as headquarters for several transnational companies, such as Amazon.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: The residence is an excellent example of a Georgian plan residence consisting of a main body with a wing on each side. The wing on the right side consists of a garage at ground level and living space above it. The

[22] National Archives of Ireland, Christina Mannsell, "Damage to Property Act, 1923," [FIN/COMP/2/6/123 3/3].
[23] Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1958, Hearings before Subcommittee on Appropriations House of Representatives, Eighty-Fifth Congress (1st Session), pp. 882-884 ; Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1959, Hearings before Subcommittee on Appropriations House of Representatives, Eighty-Fifth Congress (2nd Session), pp. 798-800.

wing on the left side of the front elevation is actually a wall designed to give the appearance of balance and symmetry.

The house displays architectural elements of the Greek Revival and Neo-Classical styles. The use of these styles is uncommon in Dublin residences, and is mostly seen in government buildings in the city center at Dublin Castle. Key architectural details include a Greek Key motif that runs the course of the entrance porch entablature. The Greek Key is also found on the front gate and on several landscape urns in the rear garden. The wing located on the right side of the front elevation features a triangular pediment, a common detail of the Greek Revival style. A Laurel Wreath design, often associated with the Neo-Classical style is evident at the top of the pilasters located on the front elevation of the house. The exterior dentil molding below the soffit is in a swag motif, also common of the Neo-Classical style.

2. Condition of Fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: Dimensions of the building were not recorded in the field survey.

2. Foundations: Due to limitations on survey investigation, it is unclear as to what type of foundation the house sits upon. Most likely, the foundation of the house is limestone. [24]

3. Walls: The load bearing walls are brick situated upon a stone foundation. The stucco finish on the exterior rear façade is rusticated to appear as cut course stone.

4. Structural Systems, Framing: The exterior walls are load-bearing brick masonry. The 2017 field survey did not include a review of the framing or roof system.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: The front entrance door consists of a four panel door with turn bell and a decorative lion-head knocker. The portico features a flat roof with two Doric columns providing support. Two pilasters with Doric flute mimicry bound the front door.

Above the front door is a highly ornate rectangular light with a fan-type pattern set in lead.

[24] Limestone is an abundant resource in the Dublin vicinity, while granite appears closer to the Wicklow Mountains. See http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/FindOutMore/Ruins%20-%20The%20Conservation%20and%20Repair%20of%20Masonary%20Ruins%20(2010).pdf

b. Windows: The house has three living levels, a ground level that is partially under street grade, a first floor that is entered by way of the front entrance, and a second level. Windows on the ground level and second level feature a six light over three light configuration, a fairly common window seen in late Georgian residences in Dublin. The first floor windows consist of six light over six light, also a fairly common window configuration for late Georgia houses in Dublin.

The field survey in 2017 did not allow for inspection of the window sash system.

6. Roof: The main body of the house features a hipped roof. Two large chimney systems break the ridge line of the hipped roof.

The primary roof element is slate.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plan: The interior floor plan is indicative a Georgian plan. The interior is symmetrically balanced with a centered hall and set of rooms on each side.

On the first floor, a stairway in the front hall leads to the second floor. A rear stairwell leads to the ground floor.

2. Flooring: The majority of the house features wood flooring. The main hall of the house has a tile floor laid in a simple diagonal pattern. The tile appears to be an alteration of the original hall flooring. The present hall tile was most likely added in the early to mid-twentieth century.

3. Wall and ceiling finish: The interior walls of the house are finished in plaster. At several locations on the first floor and above the stairwell, decorative plasterwork is evident on the ceiling. Unfortunately, decades of heavy coats of paint have obscured some of the ornate details of the plasterwork. The Greek Key motif, however, is still evident within the plasterwork detail.

4. Doorways and Doors: The interior paneled doors of the house appear to be original.

5. Trim and Woodwork: On the first floor, paneled trim work bounds all window and door openings. Though not uniform throughout the house, square-notched dentil molding is sometime featured as an inset detail for window openings.

6. Mechanical: The field survey in 2017 did not include an inspection of the house's mechanical systems.